



City of Rockville

MEMORANDUM

May 20, 2011

TO: Mayor and City Council

VIA: Scott Ullery, City Manager

FROM: Stacey Webster, Budget and Finance Manager

SUBJECT: FY 2012 Budget Public Testimony

The FY 2012 Budget Public Hearing agenda item from the meeting of May 9, 2011, summarized all written testimony received by the City Clerk as of noon on April 29, 2011 (Exhibits 1 through 43), as well as the testimony given at the first two FY 2012 general budget public hearings (held on December 6, 2010 and April 4, 2011) and the constant yield tax rate public hearing (held April 4, 2011).

A complete summary of the testimony given at the third and final general public hearing can be found on Attachment A. In addition, all written testimony received by the City Clerk between April 29 and May 20, 2011, is summarized on Attachment B, and is included as Exhibits 44 through 58.

The official FY 2012 budget public record closed today, May 20, 2011. Final FY 2012 budget adoption is scheduled for Monday, May 23, 2011.

Attachments:

Attachment A – Summary of Testimony from final Public Hearing on May 9, 2011
Attachment B – Summary of Written Testimony received from April 29 to May 20, 2011
Exhibits 44 through 58 – Written Testimony received from April 29 to May 20, 2011

**Mayor and Council Budget Public Hearing
FY 2012 Operating and CIP Budgets**

Attachment B

May 9, 2011 - Public Hearing #3

Speaker	Resident / Organization	Comment / Request
Agnes Saenz	Executive Director of Community Ministries of Rockville	Caregiver Agency Grant Funding. (EXHIBIT #52)
Jonathan Nagle	Resident of Chase Partnership House	Chase Partnership House. (EXHIBIT #53)
Argentina del Cid	Patient of Kaseman Heath Clinic	Ms. Del Cid thanked the Mayor and Council for their support of the Kaseman Health Clinic. She also expressed her appreciation for the Kaseman Clinic.
Cindy Cotte Griffiths	Representative of Human Services Advisory Commission	Ms. Cotte Griffiths thanked the Mayor and Council for the overall 2.7% increase in caregiver grant funding, and asked the Mayor and Council to set a goal of contributing 1% of the annual General Fund budget to caregiver agencies going forward.
Bob Ekman	President of Rockville Science Center	Rockville Science Center and Consortium for Science. (EXHIBIT #56)
Art Stigle	Resident	Mr. Stigle read a statement from Joe McClane regarding the use of City funds and the prioritization of activities (referenced recreation programs and RedGate). Mr. Stigle also noted that he does not support a budget that increases property taxes to fund RedGate.
Judy Miller	Resident	Ms. Miller made general comments on funding essential services (Police and recreation programs), funding executive compensation, the increase in the retirement age to 65, and the City's overall reliance on consultants. Ms. Miller also stated that she is concerned that neighborhood priorities are being left behind, and hopes that more City outreach efforts will be made.
Mary van Balgooy	Executive Director of Peerless Rockville	Ms. van Balgooy thanked the Mayor and Council for their support of Peerless Rockville. She described the Peerless organization, along with the services and programs that they provide to residents and the general community.
Tom Raymond	AFSCME Union Representative	Mr. Raymond expressed that members of the AFSCME Union were concerned that two Union positions were filled by former RedGate employees. The first employee filled a supervisor position (this means 2 supervisors for 6 people), and the second employee has not yet joined the Union so that work crew must work short or with labor ready until Union membership is established.
Joey Pritchard	Local AFSCME Union President	Mr. Pritchard expressed that Union employees deserve to get the 3.25% step increase that is stated in the side letter. He asked that it be funded in the FY 2012 budget.
Alenjandro Escobar	Supporter of Latino Outreach Program	Mr. Escobar thanked the Mayor and Council for their support of the Latino Outreach Program, and gave examples of how the program has impacted his life and allowed him to reach his goals.
John McKee	Resident	Mr. McKee briefly described his own employment history, and stated that there are people who are not getting increases this year or next year.
John Canellas	Member of AFSCME Union	Mr. Canellas asked the Mayor and Council to clarify what was included in the FY 2012 budget in terms of salary increases for AFSCME represented employees.

**Written Public Testimony
FY 2012 Operating and CIP Budgets**

Attachment B

Testimony Received from April 29 to May 20, 2011

Exhibit	Name	Resident or Organization	Main Topic
#44	Lucinda Hall	Resident	FY 2012 Budget General
#45	I. Marshall Levy	Resident	Senior Center
#46	Norene Stovall	Senior Citizen Commissioner	Defined Contribution Vesting Period
#47	Audrey Beck	Resident	Senior Center
#48	Dorie Mangan	Resident	RedGate Golf Course
#49	Marcus Lee	Resident	RedGate Golf Course
#50	Theresa Defino	Resident	Skate Park
#51	James Goheen	Resident	RedGate Golf Course
#52	Agnes Saenz	Executive Director, Community Ministries of Rockville	Caregiver Agency Grant Funding
#53	Jonathan Nagle	Resident, Chase Partnership House	Chase Partnership House
#54	Anne Mahoney Robbins	Resident	Employee Compensation
#55	Roald Schrack	Resident	City Debt
#56	Bob Ekman	President, Rockville Science Center	Rockville Science Center and Consortium for Science
#57	Eleanor Booe	Resident	Senior Center Bus Service
#58	Robert Fonner	Resident	RedGate Golf Course



2012 Budget
Lucinda Hall
to:
mayorcouncil
04/30/2011 08:42 PM
Show Details

EXHIBIT NO. 44
FY12 BUDGET
[Attachment B](#)

Dear Mayor and Council:

I urge you to give careful, and thoughtful, consideration, during the 2012 budget process. The impact, of the finalized budget will be far reaching; and will affect citizens and businesses, in Rockville.

I support fully funding the Senior Center, and other recreational facilities, in the City, at their current levels, or higher. The Senior Center and Senior Programs, provide invaluable services to Rockville seniors. For seniors, with limited fixed incomes, many of their needs might otherwise go unmet.

I also ask that you give serious thought to continued funding for the Redgate Golf Course and the City's parking garages. These items should not continue to drain money at the expense of other City programs and services.

Sincerely,

Lucinda Hall

Lucinda Hall
210 Elizabeth Avenue
301-340-3328

Senior Center Services Testimony
I. Marshall Levy

5/21/11
JML

It has been brought to my attention that I am a senior citizen and that, accordingly, I am one of an increasing number, both locally and nationally. In Rockville that number is approximately 9000, out of a total population of 63000 or over 14%. And in Maryland, according to AARP, that number is 884,000 out of a 2010 census total population of 5.77M, or 15%. Here are some more numbers; I am an active member of the Rockville Senior Center, one of over 1000. As an active member, I avail myself of the services offered by the Center. My wife (also a member of the Center) and I lead an active social calendar using every opportunity to encourage friends and acquaintances to utilize Center services. As such, we expect senior participation at the Center to continue increasing. Also, we are fortunate, for now, to be able to bring ourselves to the Center, independently. However, we are aware of many seniors who are not so fortunate with limited independence. But the current services provided by the Center mitigate that misfortune by providing transportation for those seniors of our community, up to 32000 trips last year. This is a very important point. Those seniors, less independent but alert, need social interaction, or groceries, or exercise, become shut-ins with no other means of transportation. This truly becomes a health problem, because many shut-ins become clinically depressed, with a loss of incentive to participate and a loss of dignity.

At the same time, I am aware of the pain experienced by the City staff while undergoing the budgetary process. As a retired Beltway company manager, I have been-there-done-that more than once in my career. How can we minimize disruptions in services and affect the least number of employees and the citizens of Rockville? Choices made are influenced by Department recommendations, but we must not forget the people aspect, in my opinion, to our decisions. So, if the Mayor and Council and the City Manager will permit me, I would like to offer a strong request that due considerations in the budget process include the impact to our senior citizens, especially those who are least capable of going with the flow.



From Norene Stovall on Budget
Norene Stovall
to:
mayorcouncil
05/03/2011 10:40 AM
[Show Details](#)

EXHIBIT NO. 46
FY12 BUDGET [Attachment B](#)

I'm sorry I was unable to attend the Citizens' Forum last evening.

The article in last week's Gazette about the City budget concerning changes to employee vesting is of concern. Shortening the vesting period to just three years seems to be an unusually short period of time. Such a move usually is taken when there are problems recruiting or retaining staff. The city staff I have encountered in my years of interaction with them have been well trained long-term individuals who are very familiar with their duties and obligations. It doesn't seem that there is a retention problem here.

What is to stop Rockville from becoming a training ground for other municipalities if they can take their contributions and those of the taxpayers with them after such a short period as three years? Why is this needed now? Moving the retirement ages up only seems appropriate in the face of such moves in other areas including Social Security. The very short vesting period is not needed to "make up" for that move, I don't believe. While the amount mentioned in the article seems small for now, the potential is enormous.

I urge you to consider this step very carefully. Such a move in the face of cuts to services to citizens, particularly seniors, seems particularly unwise.

Thank you for your time.
Norene Y. Stovall, Senior Citizen Commissioner

Testimony Senior Center – May 2 – Audrey Beck

Good evening, Mayor Marcuccio and members of the Council. I want to talk about the reduction in the FY 2012 Senior Services Budget, and some benefits I have received from the Rockville Senior Center:

About 3 years ago, after completing physical therapy for a back injury, I enrolled in the T'ai Chi class. This class helped me recover, and I'm still taking the class and enjoying the many mental and physical benefits from this exercise. I have also taken many other exercise classes and attended lectures on home maintenance and health-related concerns. On several occasions, I have relied on the senior bus for transportation to the Center for these activities.

Currently, I have been playing piano on Tuesdays for about 10 folks that I met in the lunchroom at the center. They rely on the senior bus for their lunch (5 days a week).

This group (I call them my fan club) is very enthusiastic about our sing-a-longs and this wonderful social activity. Having lunch and socializing at the center is the high point of their day.

There is a reduction in the FY 2012 Senior Services Budget that shows up as one less full time employee, equivalent to a bus driver position. Seniors from Bethany House, Heritage House, Town Center, Americana Centre, Congressional Apartments and numerous private homes rely on this bus service for noon meals, health monitoring, recreation, socializing, educational activities and physical exercise.

I urge you to restore the necessary funding to meet the current needs and in anticipation of the expected growth in the number of seniors living in our wonderful city.

Thank you.



Rockville Budget
jmangan3119

to:

mayorcouncil

05/05/2011 10:25 AM

Cc:

Dorie M Mangan

Show Details

EXHIBIT NO. 48
FY12 BUDGET

Attachment B

As a Rockville resident for over thirty years, I wanted to provide input on the current budget. In general, I've found the city to be well run with only minor issues with governance. In addition, I've always felt that my family has received the highest quality of services, resulting in an excellent quality of life.

However, I've recently been disturbed by the on-going controversy regarding the future of the Red Gate golf course. It's obvious from the recent consulting study that the course is in very poor financial shape and will require massive city subsidies forever. Today's Gazette article also reinforced my view that Red Gate requires much higher per capita funding than any other city recreational facilities. In addition, due to weather issues, Red Gate can only be used a maximum of eight months a year, unlike our centers and indoor pool, which are available throughout the year.

In a time of difficult economic choices for everyone, I believe it's time to either lease Red Gate to an outside authority or close it immediately. I salute the two council members who've had the courage and financial sense to call for a change in ownership or management of Red Gate.

Please, no more costly studies. By the way, I'm a golfer and have a tremendous number of golfing options in the County.



comment on FY12 budget
Marcus Lee to: mayorcouncil

EXHIBIT NO. 49
FY12 BUDGET Attachment B

05/05/2011 10:00 PM

Dear Mayor and Councilmembers,

I am writing to express my dismay at how much the golf course is costing our city. I was also surprised to read Mayor Marcuccio's remarks as reported in this week's issue of the Gazette, to the effect that there is "value" in the "asset" of the golf course, compared to other city recreational facilities.

The numbers as reported in the Gazette speak for themselves. The golf course is bleeding badly, and has by far the fewest users/visits compared to other city recreational facilities. The "value" of the golf course obviously benefits only the small minority of citizens who do use it. If it's such a valuable asset, then sell it -- what's the point of keeping a valuable asset if it's just bleeding us from year to year?

And yet -- as a taxpayer I am being told that the \$100 property tax credit will be removed, that there are cutbacks in all aspects of expenditure, while we continue to subsidize the golf course.

Sincerely,
Marcus Lee
2427 Henslowe Dr

Date: 04/05/2011 01:28 PM

Subject: Re: Skate Park Status Update

This is an excerpt from my testimony of April 12, 2010 (attached):

"I am requesting that you consider funding improvements to the skatepark that have been before the Mayor and Council in the previous two capital improvement budgets, but that have never been funded. These again have been postponed, and now show in the 2012 capital improvement budget, under Recreation Services, Outdoor Recreation Cost Center. Chapter 14, page 23.

I am asking you to bring this expenditure forward to 2011 and fund it fully. The requested expenditure is \$60,000, which replace only half of the structures in the park."

-----Original Message-----

From: SUllery@rockvillemd.gov

To: Theresa Defino <tdefino@aol.com>

Cc: bhall@rockvillemd.gov; JMcLaren@rockvillemd.gov; mayorandcouncil@rockvillemd.gov;

PGajewski@rockvillemd.gov; ptakate@hotmail.com; SWebster@rockvillemd.gov

Sent: Tue, Apr 5, 2011 1:15 pm

Subject: Re: Skate Park Status Update

Dear Theresa,

I've combed the current adopted CIP for mention of this project in FY 12 and have come up empty. Can you point me to what you're looking at?

The mention of this project in the FY11 operating budget as a planned project for FY 12 is not an appropriation, nor is it a guarantee for subsequent year recommendation or appropriation. The conversion of the FY11 \$15K appropriation from design to actual improvements was a change that took place during the current fiscal year. In large part I credit Mr. McLaren's ingenuity and resourcefulness for this conversion of a planned expenditure for consultants to an actual expenditure for physical improvements. We've been able to cobble together \$35K for physical improvements to the skate park, which I understand falls short of your expectations for \$45K-\$60K.

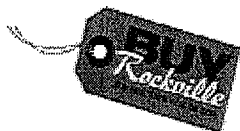
I expect the Mayor and Council will address this matter during the upcoming work sessions and decide whether to accept or modify my recommendation.

Regards,

Scott

Scott Ullery, City Manager
City of Rockville
111 Maryland Avenue

Rockville, MD 20850-2364
240-314-8102
FAX: 240-314-8130



Theresa Defino ---04/05/2011 12:50:26 PM---As I first noted, there was \$60,000 in the 2012 CIP for the skatepark. That no longer exists.

From: Theresa Defino <tdefino@aol.com>

To: SUllery@rockvillemd.gov, PGajewski@rockvillemd.gov

Cc: bhall@rockvillemd.gov, JMcLaren@rockvillemd.gov,
mayorandcouncil@rockvillemd.gov, ptakate@hotmail.com,
SWebster@rockvillemd.gov

Date: 04/05/2011 12:50 PM

Subje Re: Skate Park Status Update
ct:

As I first noted, there was \$60,000 in the 2012 CIP for the skatepark.
That no longer exists.

-----Original Message-----

From: SUllery@rockvillemd.gov

To: PGajewski@rockvillemd.gov

Cc: bhall@rockvillemd.gov; JMcLaren@rockvillemd.gov; mayorandcouncil@rockvillemd.gov;
ptakate@hotmail.com; SWebster@rockvillemd.gov; Theresa Defino <tdefino@aol.com>

Sent: Tue, Apr 5, 2011 12:45 pm

Subject: Re: Skate Park Status Update

Piotr,

In FY 11, we budgeted \$20,000, not \$60K. We showed \$60K as a potential project for FY 12. My recommendation for FY 12 is \$15K.

Scott



2012 Budget
James Goheen to: mayorcouncil

05/08/2011 02:33 PM

History: This message has been replied to.

Dear Mayor & Council:

Some things to consider concerning the budget:

No one will base their decision on living in the city because the city runs a golf course.

15,000 city homeowners lose a \$100.00 tax credit to support a golf course.?

62,000 residents will pony up approximately \$600,000 to support approx 1,000 city golfers?

My friends & I continue to play at the county golf courses because they offer a much better value than the city. Mayor & council should request ideas from the public & city staff on alternate uses for the RedGate

property. It does not make economic sense to continue to operate the golf course.

One last point, you can't compare subsidies for the Senior Center with those for the golf course. Golfers are relatively well to do & do not need subsidies! The Senior Center offers many needed services for those less advantaged.

Good luck with your continued budget deliberations.

Sincerely. Jim Goheen

May 9, 2011 -- Rockville Budget hearing

Good evening Mayor Marcuccio and members of the City Council.

My name is Agnes Saenz, I am the Executive Director of Community Ministries of Rockville. This evening I am speaking on behalf of the Rockville Caregiver's Coalition, a group of over 24 human services programs.

We have several of our Caregivers members here this evening and I would like to quickly recognize them by asking them to please stand. Thank you all for coming this evening.

First of all we want to express our appreciation to the Mayor and Council for your support to Human Services and more so during these difficult economic times. We are grateful to the city that in these difficult times when non-profits are experiencing budget cuts from the state, the county and private foundations, the City of Rockville is not making cuts and it is actually increasing the Human Services Budget.

We appreciate your increase of 2.7% in the overall Human Service Budget. Another major help that we appreciate from you is eliminating the contingency fund and allocating those funds to the caregivers group since the beginning of the year.

You have heard me say this before but I just want to say it again because I believe it would be a great plan for the city and that is to make the City's Human Services budget no less than 1% of the City budget. So, I hope we can work towards that for next year and the years to come. Currently that percentage is 0.9 of 1% so we are close. In dollars it would mean another \$80,000+ to be added to the Human Services budget.

On behalf of the Rockville Caregivers Coalition, I want to present to you a booklet of all the Caregiver groups that include a description of each program, pictures and contact information in case you wish to contact any of the caregiver members.

After me, you will hear from three clients who receive services from Rockville Caregiver agencies. They can tell better than anybody in the Caregivers Coalition what it means to them to receive and have access to human services.

Thanks so much for the opportunity to speak before you this evening.

**TESTIMONY OF
Jonathan Nagle
Before Rockville City Council
May 9, 2011**

Hello Honorable Council Members, Staff, and Guest.

I am Jonathan Nagle, a resident of the Chase Partnership House Program. I thank you for allowing me to speak with you tonight. I would like to offer a short history of myself and How Chase Partnership House, one of the programs that receives funds through the Human Services Grants, has and will affect my life. Not long ago, I was happily married with a nice house and a bad drinking problem. The desire drove me from my family and out onto the streets. For 10 years plus, I was a homeless bum. I went in and out of hospitals and 28 day programs, and all to no avail for me. Finally I asked for a long term program and I met Mr. Booker and was introduced to Chase.

Over the past five months, I have learned more about myself and my disease than I have in the past 50 years. The staff is very professional and they try to help the clients any way they can. I believe that if not for Chase and everyone involved, I may very well not be here. I thank you for funding the Human Services Programs at the currently proposed level and hope you will not see it necessary to reduce the funding level, as the need for their services is so great. Programs like Chase and Community Ministries of Rockville are true life savers.

Again, thank you for helping those of us who need it the most.

Submitted by:
Jonathan Nagle

EXHIBIT NO. 54
FY12 BUDGET

Attachment B

Anne Robbins

to:

AndreaQ Bernardo, Ardis & Al Fisher, Audrey Beck, Betty Briscoe, betty spano, Brad Rourke, bridget Newton, Brigetta Mullican, Christina Ginsberg, Ciriaco Gonzales, David Simon, dlevy, Ellen Exelbert, gelinjac, grahamd, hiattf, Ike Leggett, Irwin Cohen, Jack Leiderman, Jack Leiderman, jim beller, Mayor and Council Mayor and Council, anner41

05/09/2011 09:18 PM

Show Details

Tonight, I watched something very sad ; the defense of the salaries and benefits for the Rockville executive employees; at a time of recession and many jobless, the city and its bureaucratic answers shine like a black star. The finance director, Gavin Cohen said in The Gazette, that "turnout has been low, and he does not expect an increase in hiring in the coming year". So much for that argument. As someone who started her career in HR, and spent 10 years on the City Council, I got used to executives saying that certaIN THINGS WERE TRADITION, AS THOUGH THEY COULDN'T BE CHANGED. Yet, many of these employee expenses that land on the taxpayer should be changed. Also, whether they are called raises or not, money lands in the pockets of the senior employees. Is there no shame?

Sincerely,

Anne Mahoney Robbins



Budget deliberations

Roald Schrack o mayorcouncil

05/10/2011 08:41 PM

Dear Friends,
Was interested in your discussion of borrowing vs. saving to spend for capital improvements.
A 20 year at 4% loan for \$1million will end up costing you \$1,454,352 assuming normal equal mortgage payments.
You would be paying less than this actually if the amortization schedule did not include an inflation adjustment.
If instead you start saving money for 20 years at a savings rate of 2% (even that is generous today) adding \$50,000 per year, you would end up with \$1,313,463. But during that same 20 years the inflation rate was 2.3% (the average for the last 10 years) then your savings would only be worth \$820,000 in buying power. You would be justified in asking the finance department to do a realistic calculation for you but it doesn't seem to me possible to save money before projected need, at current interest rates and inflation rates and come out ahead.

The argument about who is paying for the use of the improvement is even stronger. Comparing voter lists for the past 10 years you can see that there is an average yearly turnover of 4.9% of the population. In 10 years you have a 60% turnover in the population if the mobility of the population were equal for everybody. I don't think it is but I haven't yet figured out how mobility varies. I think there is a substantial fraction of the population that sticks around and a fraction that is very mobile. Spreading out the payments for capital improvements to roughly cover the lifetime of the improvement seems the fairest method of payment, no matter what the variation in mobility is.

I want to commend The Mayor and Council for a well designed and carried out budget session that presented many difficult decisions.

You may not have noticed, but this is the first time in about 25 years that I did not put in my 2 cents on the budget. So here it is.

Roald Schrack

Comments on City Grant to Rockville Science Center
Bob Ekman
to:
mayorcouncil
05/11/2011 09:47 AM
Show Details

EXHIBIT NO. 56
FY12 BUDGET Attachment B

Madam Mayor and Council Members,

(This is the written text of my comments made to you on Monday, May 9.)

Good evening. I am Bob Ekman, President of Rockville Science Center and the Rockville Consortium for Science. I live at 524 Carr Ave, Rockville. I am here today to comment on our grant requests for FY12. The Science Center has asked for \$35,000 and the Consortium has asked for \$5000. The proposed budget contains \$26,00 for the Center and \$4,250 for the Consortium.

We are thankful for the grants and are certain we can maintain our programs with these grants. I can say this with certainty, because, while the funding from the City is critical to our operations, just as critical is the commitment of our volunteers and board members. We will be successful in fulfilling our mission and meeting our goals.

During the past year, we have conducted several activities and events of benefit to the residents of Rockville. We have conducted monthly Science Cafés for adults interested in current science topics. We held a successful robotics camp last summer and followed it up with sponsoring three FIRST Lego League robotics teams this past fall and winter. We held several excursions, including a geology walk and a tour of Aeras vaccine research facility. We exhibited at the USA Science and Engineering Festival last fall with the Maryland Science Center and are planning to participate in the festival scheduled for April 2012. And finally, the Consortium conducted a very successful 22nd annual Science Day at Montgomery College this past April.

Our Science Center organization has continued to mature and establish itself. We have contracted for a director of operations. We are working with VisArts to establish an office in downtown Rockville. And we have initiated contracts for marketing. Both organizations are seeking additional funding through sponsors, grants, contributions and user fees.

I have lived in Rockville for 40 year and have seen many changes. – mostly good, but some not so good. Some of the growth has seemed random and a little excessive. Just outside the City, the growth has been extreme. The City needs institutions to maintain its identity as the center of Montgomery County. A science Center will help create the City as a destination, while providing great value to its current and future residents.

As a society, we are faced with serious issues over the next 40 years. As we approach a population of ten billion, we will need to double our food production and energy production. Unfortunately, our current technology will not get us there. We must expand our science exploration and develop new technology. We need another generation of excited and creative scientists and engineers. And the science literacy level of our citizens needs to be maintained and supported. The Science Center and the Consortium are focused on doing just that.

Thank you for your considerations.

Bob Ekman, Rockville, MD
Rockville Science Center

Dear Mayor,

I need the Senior Bus to go to the store for food.

I can't walk and our Bus driver is a big help to me.

She helps putting me on the Bus & makes sure I

am O.K. Helps me get off.

We at Bethany House can not do without the Bus.

Or we won't eat.

Please do not take the shopping bus away from us.

I like to shop for my own food. The Senior Bus leaves us do that.

When the weather is bad.

we always have the

Bus, and that is a big help to me and others.

Thank you

Eleanor Boone

199 Rollins Ave

Bethany House

APT 314

2011 MAY 12 PM 4:48

UNIT ELEPHANT



elimination of property tax credit
ROBERT FONNER to: mayorcouncil

05/15/2011 07:27 PM

Thanks to an article in the Gazette, we learned that the Rockville city government is planning to eliminate the \$100 tax credit for homeowners in the city of Rockville. We further understand that the money that comes from elimination of the tax credit will allow the city to balance the RedGate fund, that is, a public golf course that is not used by the majority of residents of the city. If it requires \$630,000 of taxpayer money, coming predominantly from people who couldn't care less about golf, the city should either privatize RedGate, raise its fees to cover its costs, or close it down entirely.

Why should the taxpayers of Rockville pay to subsidize a playground for a relatively few adults? There are plenty of golf courses in Montgomery County to accommodate any golfers who would feel inconvenienced by the closure of RedGate golf course, which in these times of fiscal belt tightening can only be considered as a frivolity.